

DRAFT

DILLON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Dillon Field Office
Dillon, Montana

MARCH 2004

DRAFT
DILLON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

1. Responsible Agencies:

United States Department of the Interior,
Bureau of Land Management (Lead Agency)

Beaverhead County (Cooperating Agency)

Madison County (Cooperating Agency)

2. Draft (X) Final ()

3. Type of Action: Administrative (X) Legislative ()

4. Abstract: This Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement describes and analyzes four alternatives for managing the public lands and resources administered by the Bureau of Land Management's Dillon Field Office and located in southwestern Montana in Beaverhead and Madison counties. These alternatives are: Alternative A (continuation of current management, or the "no action" alternative); Alternative B (the agency preferred alternative) and Alternatives C and D. Major RMP issues include upland and riparian management, forest and woodlands management, noxious weeds, sage grouse and westslope cutthroat trout conservation, commercial uses, proposed ACEC designations, Wild and Scenic River suitability findings, and travel management designations.

5. Comments on the Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement must be received within 90 days from publication of the Notice of Availability by the Environmental Protection Agency. The close of the comment period will be announced in news releases, newsletters, and on the RMP website at www.mt.blm.gov/dfo/rmp.

6. For further information, contact:

Renee Johnson, RMP Project Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Dillon Field Office
1005 Selway Drive
Dillon, Montana 59725
Telephone commercial: (406) 683-8016
Telephone toll-free: (877) 521-2889
FAX: (406) 683-2970
email: MT_Dillon_RMP@blm.gov

READER'S GUIDE

Preparation of this document was guided by BLM planning regulations issued under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and federal environmental policy under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The Draft RMP/EIS primarily focuses on eight planning issues and the decisions needed to resolve them. The issues were identified through public scoping, concerns raised to BLM staff in interactions with public land users, and resource management concerns of the BLM and cooperating agencies. The eight issues are:

- Riparian and Upland Vegetation Management
- Forest and Woodland Management
- Noxious Weeds
- Sage Grouse and Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation
- Commercial Uses
- ACECs
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Travel Management

Other management concerns are addressed in the RMP, but did not drive the formulation of the alternatives. To assist agency decision-makers and the general public in choosing appropriate solutions to the planning issues, four alternatives or combinations of management options are proposed and their impacts evaluated. The alternatives were limited to those that span a reasonable and implementable way of managing public lands and federal minerals, while offering a broad range options.

DOCUMENT FORMAT

The format of this RMP/EIS is based on BLM guidance issued in 2001 that is meant to provide a common look and feel to RMP planning documents being prepared by BLM across the west. Five main sections are used throughout the organization of the document:

- Resources
- Resource Uses
- Fire Management
- Special Designations
- Social and Economic Considerations

Each of these five sections is then split into subsections of resources, resource uses, or program areas that are presented in alphabetical order.

Summary

The Summary provides an overview of discussions that are detailed in the full document and serves as a synopsis of the

planning process and the alternative proposals and potential environmental consequences resulting from that process.

Chapter 1 (Introduction)

This chapter contains background information on the planning process and sets the stage for the information that is presented in the rest of the document. There are nine main sections in Chapter 1, which include the Introduction, Purpose and Need for the Plan, Planning Area and Map, Scoping and Issues, Planning Criteria and Legislative Constraints, Planning Process, Related Plans, Policy and Overall Vision.

Chapter 2 (Alternatives)

This chapter provides the description of management scenarios proposed for the next 20 years. This chapter uses the five section organization and includes a narrative section followed by two tables. The first table compares the alternative proposals; the second table compares, in a summarized fashion, the impacts of implementing the alternatives.

Chapter 3 (Affected Environment)

This chapter provides background information on the various resources, resource uses, and program areas administered by BLM that could be impacted by plan decisions and describes their condition and trend. This chapter is organized with the same structure as Chapter 2. Each section begins with a list of relevant authorities and policies which guide management of the resource or program area. Brief descriptions of the cited laws can be found in **Appendix A**.

Chapter 4 (Environmental Consequences)

This chapter describes the projected impacts and changes that would result with implementation of each of the alternatives. The chapter is organized by alternative and uses the same five section format as Chapters 2 and 3. While details of the impacts are provided in this chapter, the summary table of impacts is found at the end of Chapter 2.

Chapter 5 (Consultation and Coordination)

This chapter includes a description of public involvement opportunities and collaborative processes, lists of agencies, and organizations receiving the document, and identifies the preparers of the Draft RMP/EIS.

Other Information

Tables and Figures have been included throughout the document to display and summarize pertinent information. **Acreages** displayed in this document should be considered ap-

proximations even when displayed to the nearest acre. Most acreages were calculated from GIS coverages and as a result may not match acres provided in prior published documents that contained calculations from master title plats or other base data. For example, acres calculated for Wilderness Study Areas and reported in the 1991 Montana Statewide Wilderness Study Area report vary from the GIS calculated acres for those same areas. In other instances, acres have been rounded to the nearest 100 acres as analysis was completed. These rounded figures should also be considered approximations. The data used throughout this document is for land use planning purposes and not necessarily for actual on-the-ground implementation. The precision afforded by GIS calculation does not reflect project level accuracy. Acreage figures provided in this document for land

use plan analysis purposes will be refined as subsequent site specific analysis is conducted.

Appendices are lettered and organized by topic and included in a separate volume for easy reference. Each appendix may contain several pieces of information related to the appendix topic. A table of contents is provided at the beginning of the lengthier appendices.

Maps have also been included in a separate volume for easy reference and are numbered sequentially based on their first reference within the document. Maps related to Appendix material are included and referenced within each appendix and are not numbered with the RMP document maps.